AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Newsletter

Northern California Regional Office November 1960

YOUTH CHALLENGED TO YEAR OF SERVICE ABROAD

The AFSC announced in November the inauguration of a new program to send up to 50 young people on a year of service at home or abroad. This fall 10 to 15 young people will be appointed to serve in pilot assignments in Germany, France, Guatemala, Haiti, and the United States. World Service Internes in Germany will work in neighborhood centers founded by the Service Committee at the end of World War II at Mittelhof (Berlin), Darmstadt, Wuppertal, Cologne, and Neukölln. In Paris a world service interne is already assisting our school affiliation program. Interneship in India, Tanganyika, and Nigeria are now being arranged. In the words of Colin Bell, AFSC Executive Secretary, this new venture will provide youth an opportunity to pioneer in "the substitution of national greatness through service for greatness through power, to search after the relevance of nonviolence in a very violent world, and to establish new, real, adult, sensitive relationships with men of other races and cultures." The average cost per interne is $3000 per year. Participants are asked to pay as much as they can toward their individual costs. A brochure describing world service internships is available from your regional office.

NEGRO YOUTH FROM VIRGINIA

Prince Edward County, Virginia, produced one of the five cases which led to the historic May 17, 1954, decision of the United States Supreme Court ordering public school integration: "We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place." In 1959, confronted with its failure to stave off integration, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors refused to authorize any tax money for education and thereby closed the public schools. A private school system for white children was set up. Negro children remained out of school altogether. In mid-summer when it became clear that schools would not open in the fall for a second year, the AFSC decided to sponsor an Emergency Placement Project for the most gifted of Prince Edward County children. In a one-month crash program, the AFSC arranged for the relocation of forty-seven Negro children from Prince Edward County to ten schools in six states: Maryland, Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The 17 girls and 30 boys, ages 13 to 18, are living in the homes of 42 white and Negro host families. Said the Dayton Daily News: "Virginia's loss is Ohio's gain. Perhaps the Negro students will some day go back to do missionary work in

their own country, spreading the word that it is invigorating to live under the terms spelled out in the Declaration of Independence." The AFSC received widespread support for the relocation program. School administrators in the host states proved eager to help fulfill the promise of democracy for these children. Local seamstresses have volunteered to make clothing and teach the girls how to sew; organizations of beauticians and barbers have volunteered to keep the children well groomed.

The AFSC continues its basic program in Prince Edward County where it hopes to strengthen the possibility for a permanent solution which will support the American belief in the importance of public schools in a democracy, which will uphold the role of the judiciary as an interpreter of the constitution, and which will affirm religious principles underlying racial justice.

2000 ASK AMERICAN INITIATIVE FOR DISARMAMENT

Outside a dime store in Minneapolis, a blind man recently stood for several hours in support of the Southern Negro protests against segregated eating facilities. He wore a sandwich board reading, in front, "Join the human race." And on the back: "None so blind as those who will not see." To encourage their fellow citizens to see alternatives to the fatal arms race in which we are ensnared, 2000 Northern Californians, on October 29th, walked two abreast from San Francisco's Opera House to Union Square carrying white and blue signs urging "American Initiative for Disarmament." The walk and rally was sponsored by four Northern California agencies, including the AFSC. Among the walkers were students, businessmen, attorneys, professors, housewives, and children. To onlookers on the 22-block walk, they distributed handbills declaring in part: "Many Americans believe that policies based on weapons of mass extermination are necessary to stop Communism and defend freedom. But we believe such policies by our government inevitably fail to realize these goals while gravely increasing the danger of all-out nuclear war. Someone must act to stop the arms race. An effort must be made to reverse the standard diplomatic approach of requiring agreement before action, by initiating action which could help make agreements more possible. We propose that our government initiate a moratorium on all further testing of missiles and outer space weapons; and simultaneously establish a reasonable system of inspection; that the President challenge the Soviet Union to make good on its own proposals to eliminate delivery systems; that should the Soviet Union not comply within a fixed period of time, the U.S. shall consider itself free to re-evaluate its position."

AFSC BEGINS EXPERIMENTAL FARM LABOR COOPERATIVE

Farm labor cooperatives as a means of bringing order and economic progress for farm workers and growers alike are being attempted in Tulare County by the AFSC. Russell Curtis, Stanford University graduate and for-

mer deputy director of the Friends Service Unit in India and Pakistan, is the newly appointed Quaker farm cooperative secretary who will be contacting small groups of migrant workers with the hope they will become the nucleus of the cooperatives. Each cooperative would (1) establish a responsible corps of workers which could negotiate with growers, without threat of strike, in establishing wages; (2) form a labor pool which growers could depend upon and draw from as they need crews, thereby providing steadier and longer work for the farm laborers; (3) increase the productivity of the workers through education in job skills; and (4) provide a base for credit and unemployment compensation. Russell Curtis says "the most important first step is to establish communication between the workers and the growers." The cooperatives would offer the growers, months ahead of harvesting, a chance to contract for responsible help. The cooperative will police its own ranks to maintain high standards. Nearly 500,000 farm workers and 86,500 Mexican braceros (contract nationals) toil on California's 90,000 farms of which 4500 hire 80% of the labor force.

QUAKER WORKERS REPORT FROM CUBA AND FRANCE

Service Committee workers abroad represent the hands of many who are not themselves free to serve directly. These workers are also the eyes and ears of those who must remain at home. Their observations take the form of International Affairs Reports from Quaker Workers. Your eyes and ears in Cuba and France have recently reported the following:

Cuba. "Outwardly, Cuba appears to be more prosperous than I have ever seen it. People are well dressed, menus are adequate in public eating places, and so far no one seemed to be suffering for lack of food in the home. . . . It is very difficult to know how much genuine support the Castro regime now enjoys. Many people told me that there is no middle ground: Everyone is either a fanatical Fidelista, or a hopelessly disillusioned opponent of the government. Actually, I did not find this to be true. Both groups do indeed exist in great numbers, but I found an equally great number of people who were torn between great admiration for the regime and an uneasy fear that it had sold out to the Communists. . . . The strength of the Revolutionary Government is, however, very great, and rests on several factors: (1) The memory of the Batista nightmare still gives the Revolutionaries the aura of liberators. (2) The great hope of Utopia, present everywhere in January, 1959, has not died. The propaganda mill keeps it alive and a very large proportion of the people still see the Revolution as the long-awaited Millennium. (3) There is a strong moral character to this Utopia. Citizens are being challenged to sacrifice for the common good instead of looking upon government as a source of personal gain. (4) The character of the Revolutionary Government continues to be military. Semi-volunteer militia units drill nightly in every city and village. (5) National patriotism is fostered by the screaming anti-American campaign. (6) Genuine gratitude is expressed by the peasants and

workers who either find their lot improved or feel that the government is making an honest effort to do so. . . . The INRA (Instituto Nacional de Reforma Agraria) is the receiver of confiscated property, agricultural or otherwise, but in many ways the Agrarian Reform is really basic, given the pro-peasant orientation of the entire program. INRA reports that during the first year of operation 2,000 People's Stores have been established, and 605,333 cattle have been acquired. Ten thousand new homes have been begun. I saw enough of the charming little cooperative villages already under construction to convince me that the project is under way on a vast scale. . . . My own conclusion, and it can only be an opinion, is that a growing number of Cubans feel that those who hold the power in the Cuban government at present are dedicated Communists. They (the really key ones) are not of the nationalistic variety but feel a close kinship with the leaders of the Soviet Union, and perhaps even more with those of China. . . . My guess is that if a really free election were to be held today, the contest would be between the Communist Revolutionaries and the Twenty-sixth-of-July Non-Communist Revolutionaries. It is also my feeling that the latter would win."

France. "Here in France (I hear) the furious shouting of a passionate argument over Algeria, which may well be the prelude to a national tragedy. It is the first time that I have lived in a society where people talk so freely of civil war. The Algerian war is the battle-cry, but it is not the issue. Today we find on one side the professional army -- notably the paratroops, the tradionalist, very conservative and monarchical-minded section of the population and many of the church hierarchy. On the other side we find the younger generation of the intelligentsia which gives France its international reputation as the home of thought and culture, the organized workers, a large body of the university, the more radical Catholics and the traditional political parties of the republic. Since the early summer public patience has snapped. For the first time great mass movements have spoken up clearly for peace in Algeria. Those working on the extreme right may start new trouble in Algiers, but they will have learnt their lesson and will make sure that a coup d'etat will be tried simultaneously in Paris. Those on the left are trying to force the pace for a show-down and in an armed clash would have the support of the well-organized F.L.N. (Algerian insurgents) and some communist shock-troops. Facing this situation, de Gaulle may still draw upon his great personal authority and popularity. However, unless he commands organized and intelligent support which does not rely upon the miracle of his personality, he is sure to fail because the inexorable march of events cannot be mastered by pomp and oratory. It is of special interest to us that the present crisis is one of conscience and that young people in their agony over a senseless and unjust conflict are forcing all Frenchmen to ask themselves whether they can continue to support a war which is destroying their prized liberties."